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Yuccas and illustrations of thirteen of the species. Eleven plates are devoted to the display of such characters as enter into the delimitation of species, while twelve reproductions of photographs show finely the facies of the different species. A new Agave, *A. Engelmanni*, is also described and figured.

OPEN LETTERS.

Who are biologists?

Botanists will feel grateful to Prof. MacMillan for his vigorous protests against the present unfortunate attitude assumed by zoologists in regard to the position of botany as one of the biological sciences. This question is one which vexes us here as well as elsewhere, but since my connection with the University we have been insisting upon a recognition—by our students at least—of the place in biological studies to which botany is entitled, and I am glad to say that there is a disposition among some of the best of our zoologists here, to grant what we claim in this respect. The question is an important one in many ways, and it has occurred to me more than once, that it would be a proper one for action by the Botanical Club in the first instance, and then, if possible, by the Biological Section of the A. A. A. S. Certainly the botanists of the United States and Canada are a sufficiently numerous body to make any serious representations from them of value. Were action taken by them in this case, and their position firmly maintained, I think it would have considerable weight in settling once for all what is a most unnecessary annoyance and injustice to an important profession.

The Madison meeting is to be an important one. At it will be gathered, it is hoped, not only all our own best men, but a number of representative men from abroad. There could be no more fitting opportunity to bring this question forward and have it freely discussed, and the present is none too early to suggest such a movement.—D. P. PENHALLOW, *McGill University, Montreal.*

Variations of the strawberry leaf.

The article of Mrs. Kellerman in the August number of the GAZETTE suggests the following: In May, 1889, I noticed upon specimens of *Fragaria* which were brought into the laboratory, additional fourth and fifth leaflets upon the petiole below the normal leaflets. Turning to Bentham and Hooker, Genera Plantarum, under Fragaria, I found "*Folia alterna, 3-foliata, rarissime foliolis paucis lateralibus adjectis pinnata v. 1 v. 5-foliata.*" I determined to search for more examples with a view of ascertaining whether the variation was rare or common in this locality.

In June of the same year, while collecting with half-a-dozen students in the vicinity of Willmette, we all so frequently found the leaves bearing the additional leaflets that we concluded that they could be spoken of as "not uncommon in this locality." October 20, 1890, I found them plentiful at the side of the railroad north of the Ridge viaduct

in a patch of ground which may have been formerly part of a garden. Of fifty leaves taken at random twelve had extra leaflets upon the petiole. Of these twelve, eight had two leaflets, opposite in four cases and alternate in four, and four had single leaflets upon the petiole below the normal leaflets.

May 7th, 1891, I found the extra leaflets abundant in the locality just mentioned and also upon our north campus near the lake shore. When picking at random one in every four or five had the extra one or two leaflets.

In July, 1891, I found in the herbarium of the Natural History Museum, Kensington, London, two specimens of Fragaria Virginiana, one collected in Colorado and the other at Kettle Falls upon the Columbia river, which had the supernumerary lateral leaflets.

My observations tend to the conclusion that in some localities twenty per cent. of the leaves of Fragaria have five leaflets, two of which usually disappear as the season advances leaving the normal trifoliate form.

Mrs. Kellerman, from the variations which she has noted, reasons that the strawberry is developing a quinquefoliate form of leaf. By the flight of his imagination in "The Evolutionist at Large," Grant Allen shows how the "fruit" of the strawberry may have developed from a potentilla; while the facts given above seem to indicate that the plant, so far as the leaves give evidence, is passing or has passed from a pinnate form, not unlike certain potentillas, having five or more leaflets, into a trifoliate form. These observations were made both upon Fragaria Virginiana and upon its variety Illinoensis.—C. B. Atwell, *Northwestern University, Evanston, Ills.*

NOTES AND NEWS.

Mr. E. W. Fisher has been appointed curator of the herbarium of Indiana University.

A dictionary of botanical terms by A. A. Crozier has recently been issued by Henry Holt & Co.

Correction.—In Mr. A. F. Foerste's article in the August Gazette, on p. 244, Hamamelis Canadensis is mentioned twice. This was an oversight, since *H. Virginiana* was intended in both cases.

The following papers by Professor Pammel appear in the Proceedings of the Iowa Academy of Sciences, vol. 1, pt. 2: Woody plants of Western Wisconsin; and, Forest vegetation of the Upper Mississippi.

Dr. H. L. Russell, whose studies of marine bacteria and of the immunity of plants from bacterial diseases are among important recent contributions to bacteriology, has accepted a fellowship in biology in the University of Chicago.

Mr. Walter H. Evans has been appointed by the Department of Agriculture, in the office of Experiment Stations, to have charge of the